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For more information contact: Erik Olds

Phone: (509) 372-8656

OFFICE OF RIVER PROTECTION PREPARES FOR DECISION ON WASTE TREATMENT PLANT CONTRACTOR

The contract solicitation period for the design and construction of Hanford's Tank Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant will formally close on Friday, October 20. At that time, the Source Evaluation Board will begin the process for evaluating proposals with the criteria outlined in ORP's Final Solicitation.

ORP is meeting its commitments for this expedited procurement process and anticipates an announcement of a decision by January 15, 2001. The expedited process has taken six months, nearly half the time of a normal process for a procurement of this magnitude, with the use of the Internet as an integral step in streamlining the process.

Due to procurement guidelines and the business-sensitive nature of the solicitation, Office of River Protection officials will not be at liberty to discuss specific proposals received on October 20. The Federal Acquisition Regulation prohibits Government actions after receipt of proposals that would favor one offeror over another, reveal an offeror's proprietary information (including cost or technical solutions), or reveal any other source selection information. Further, disclosure of any such information might also compromise the Government's negotiation position if discussions with offerors were necessary.

"ORP's mission is to build and operate the Waste Treatment Complex to complete cleanup of Hanford's tank waste," said Harry Boston, Acting Manager of the Office of River Protection. "As owners and managers, we will get a safe, efficient, and affordable facility by selecting a best-in-class contractor and creating a healthy business environment where they can succeed. Under this contract, the contractor earns fee by providing a more affordable, more effective facility, thereby providing a better return on the taxpayers' investment."

ORP has taken several steps to enhance competition for this procurement including:

- Moving the interim design effort and continuing technology development work from the former Privatization contractor to the Hanford tank farm contractor
- Requiring that the Hanford tank farm contractor not be allowed to make an offer under this solicitation
- Posting the Waste Treatment Plant conceptual design, supporting information, and the government fair cost estimate on the ORP website at <http://www.hanford.gov/orp> for use by all offerors
- Basing the evaluation of technical approach so that it is not weighted in favor of any former incumbent contractor, but on the technical and strategic approach to perform design from this point forward

- Establishing the cost proposal as a starting point, with an incentive fee structure focused on reducing cost over the full term of the contract.

Following termination of the Privatization contractor in May of 2000, ORP began the Waste Treatment Plant procurement process with an expression of interest announcement in the Commerce Business Daily on May 23. On July 31, a Draft Solicitation was posted on the Office of River Protection web site. The Draft Solicitation included a model contract, instructions for preparing a proposal, and the evaluation criteria. On August 31, 2000, the Final Solicitation was posted on the web site, where it was made available for 50 days, leading up to the proposal deadline of October 20, 2000.

Note: The Office of River Protection manages the day-to-day operation of the nation's largest and most complex environmental cleanup project ? retrieval and treatment of tank waste at the Hanford Site. More background information on the Office of River Protection can be found on the office's web site at: <http://www.hanford.gov/orp/index.html>.

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